

In 1852, the various important Surveys for the Pacific Rail Road commenced, and a review is given of their several routes and objects. To this historical report, succeeds a statement of the method of completing the general map before alluded to and some remarks on the topography of the region west of the Mississippi River.

Four reduced copies of early maps of the territory west of the Mississippi are included in the Memoir; first, of a map published with Winterbotham's History in 1796; second, of Rector and Roberdeau's map, 1818; third, a part of Finley's North America, 1826; and finally, of Bonneville's map which appeared in 1837.

The Memoir and the Map taken together are an important accession to our knowledge of the physical geography of this continent and will be of constant service not only to men of science, but to statesmen and all others who are interested in the structure and resources of the immense territory which lies to the west of the Mississippi river. In this connection, we may call attention to the tenth volume of the surveys of the Pacific Rail Road which has just been distributed, containing Part III. of the report on "Zoology," prepared by Prof. Spencer F. Baird of the Smithsonian Institution.

HISTORY OF THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA. ATLAS OF KUNSTMANN, SPRUNER AND THOMAS.—In striking contrast with the work we have noticed by Lieut. Warren and its illustrations of recent discovery, we may mention the republication of early maps of this continent (chiefly the Atlantic coast,) which has been just made under the auspices of the Bavarian government. A few copies of this truly magnificent atlas have been received by Messrs. B. Westermann & Co., in New York. In place of comment of our own, we translate from the Berlin *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde*, the following condensation of the plan of the compilers.

F. Kunstmann, K. v. Spruner and G. M. Thomas have published an Atlas on the history of the discovery of America, which consists of thirteen most interesting sheets printed in fac-simile from those most valuable chartographical documents, which are found in the Royal Library, the Library of the University and the Military Conservatory at Munich. F. Kunstmann in his learned treatise "Die Entdeckung Amerika's, which precedes the text explanatory to the charts, says, "The charts commence in the 14th century, when they first appear as the product of independent inquiry, and follow the progress of the voyages of discovery, the results of which are for the most part deposited in them. Our knowledge that the Azores were discovered in the 14th century, we owe solely to the charts, as we have no other historical accounts concerning them. The history of the Canary Isles which is at first but fragmentary, is also completed by them.

They also enlighten and increase our knowledge in relation to the discoveries in America generally. In these charts we also have original records for the history of the voyages of the separate nations. They commence with the voyages of the Italians, who first set out independently, then in the service of Portugal, Spain and England, leaving us those grand drawings of the globe, which were continued and finished by other nations. These accordingly preceded the systematic descriptions of the world, which furnished us with but poor and scanty information in regard to the discovery of America, although the charts had already presented an almost complete picture of what was then known." Of the thirteen sheets of the atlas the first five relate to the time of Magalhaens's voyage of discovery down to its completion; the following eight explain the history of discovery to the end of the 16th century. We will here attempt to show the importance of this publication by a short extract from F. Kunstmann's explanations to the charts.

The first sheet the contents of which Schmeller had made known in his academical treatise, "On several older Sea-Charts in Manuscript," (December, 1843)—is written in the Portuguese language and bears the name of its author at its head, Pedro Reinel a fez. Barros (Dec. 1, lib. 3, c. 12) mentions a Pedro and a Rodrigo Reinel. The former was sent in 1487 to the negro-chieftain Mandimansa at the Gambia. Rodrigo is mentioned in the same year as a merchantile agent in the Oasis Ouadan on his way from Arguim to Timbuctu. In the following century, the Portuguese Sebastian Alvarez, mercantile agent at Sevilla, mentions in his account of the enterprises of Magalhaens (made July 18, 1519 to King Emanuel of Portugal,) two Reinels, father and son, omitting however their christian names. "I saw, he says, the Moluccan Islands on the globe and the chart, (en la poma y carta) which Reinel the son has made here; both were yet incomplete, when his father came to him, who finished them and put the Molluccan Islands in." For this master were also made all those charts which Diego Ribero completed, who was the assistant and probably also the pupil of the older Reinel; hence the conformity in that part of Pedro Reinel's chart which represents North America, with the northern part of America in Diego Ribero's chart. The former contains in the new world, only the eastern coast of Newfoundland and our present Labrador up to Hudson's Bay, in a continuous drawing agreeing with the report given by the Venetian ambassador Pasqualigo, (October 19, 1501) on the second voyage of Caspar Cortereal in the year 1501, from which but two Caraveles with sixty natives, without Cortereal, returned. Soon after this voyage the above chart was probably worked out in Portugal.

The second chart represents the notions of that period in which North America was believed to consist of a number of islands between which, it was hoped, a passage might be found to the Molluccas. We find here the "Terra de Corte Reall" completely separated and the terra de lauorador (Labrador) as a complete island. North of Great Britain the "Terra de Uresland" (Vresland, Frisland) is situated, a name which according to Zahrtmann is derived from Ferris land as English mariners called the Farøes. Besides this, the sheet contains the West Indies (le Antilie) the northern and part of the eastern coast of South America, the latter up to Rio de Cananor, as according to Peschel, it is often written instead of Rio de Cananea, on the Italian charts published since 1507, which were copied after Ruysch.

On the third chart, which only marks the discoveries of the Portuguese, of which the Spaniards take no notice, Labrador, (or Groenland, and the "Terra de Corte Reall" appear also as separate continents in accordance with the discoveries of C. Cortereal in his two voyages in the years 1500 and 1501. As a third continent, is seen the eastern coast of South America from Cape Roque up to R. Cananea, in conformity with the results obtained by the coast-voyage in the year 1501, in which Amerigo Vespucci took part.

The fourth chart represents North America, Labrador, Newfoundland under the name Bacalnaos instead of Bacalhaos, and the country of Corte Real as all three separated from one another by straits. In Central America the Peninsula of Yucatan appears, and the chart must therefore have been finished after the year 1517. Honduras with the islands lying before the same, the Isthmus with the Pacific coast, the latter however without nomenclature, and finally the West India Islands. The South American coast, richly furnished with names, extends southerly over the R. Cananea up to C. Santa Maria, comprising a region which was not drawn upon the former sheet, which however in Kunstmann's opinion was discovered already in the year 1501; others say, that Juan de Solis discovered it first. The original of this chart in the Military Conservatory, contains also the Eastern Hemisphere, which is not communicated in this atlas for want of space. Here the Moluccan isles are noted with the addition: "ilhas de maluqua donde vem ho cravo." The fleet which Albuquerque had sent out to open the trade with the Moluccan Islands, first reached them early in the year 1512.

The fifth sheet has been taken from an atlas which consists of seven charts and formerly belonged to the Monastery of Metten but now is preserved in the Royal Library at Munich. One chart of this atlas bears the inscription: *Vesconte de Maiollo civis Janua composuy hanc cartan in Janua*, with the year 1519, which

probably also indicates the time of origin of the other six sheets. Majolo is situated in the papal dominions, and a Jacobus de Majolo condam Vesconti, probably a son of the one mentioned above, presents himself as the author of a chart: "Janua anno Domini 1551 die 19 marsi." The chart taken from this atlas by Kunstmann commences on the American continent with the coast of Honduras, upon which the Rio de Cama Roma (Cape Cameron), and the Bay of Xagoa, both discovered in 1508, are named. Besides these the four great Antilles are noted upon it and a considerable number of smaller islands. The South American continent is also already drawn out up to the Cape of St. Maria and is richly furnished with names.

The following charts belong to a period after Magalhaens's voyage. Sheets six and seven are taken from an atlas of thirteen charts, which is kept in the Library of the University, and which can only have been drawn after the year 1534, as Cuzco is mentioned in it.

The sixth sheet commences at the eastern coast of America with the terra "che descubrio steuen comes," i. e., the country which Estevan Gomez had discovered in 1525. It contains the *terra de lecondiados*, i. e., the coasts of Pennsylvania, Virginia and Carolina, which the Licentiates Lucas Vasquez de Aillon and Matienzo are supposed to have already discovered in 1520; and also Mexico under the name *Temistitan vel Misicho*;—the central American coast, near which Yucatan is represented as an island;—the Antilles and the northern coast of South America. In the south, we perceive Magalhaens's Strait (Strictum de Magellano) with the harbor of St. Julian and Fireland, and from the western coast of America is seen a continuous stretch of Colao Provincia and Peru Provincia in the south, up to California in the north, which latter is represented as a peninsula. In the remoter part of the Pacific Ocean, several of the east Asiatic islands are noted as Dshilolo, Timor, Sumatra, and on the eastern side of Asia, Bengala Civitas and China Civitas.

The seventh sheet, taken from the same atlas, represents the countries on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean: the eastern coast of America from Newfoundland (*terra de bacalaos*) in the north, to Magalhaens's Strait, inclusive of that part of the Brazilian coast which is wanting on the former chart, and the coast of La Plata south to the Strictum de Magellano and the northern coast of the Fireland with the Campana de Roldan, which is called after a German companion of Magalhaens. As on the former sheet so also here the west coast of Patagonia and the coast of Chile are wanting.

The sheets eight to twelve are taken from the atlas of Vaz Dourado, the original of which with the year 1571 is found in the Archives at Lisbon. The Royal Library at Munich possesses

a much more splendid copy of the year 1580, which however deviates in many respects from the original. The eighth sheet furnishes a complete drawing of the coast of South America south of the mouth of the La Plata with Magalhaens's Strait, on which the Cape *dellas virgines* and the Fireland, which is divided into several islands, are named. The western coast of South America is abundantly furnished with names. The ninth sheet is equally rich and contains the northern half of South America; the tenth sheet has Central and a part of North America; sheet eleven gives the region where the River St. Lawrence empties into the sea, Newfoundland as an island (a part of its eastern coast appearing as a separate isle) together with the Terra de Lavrador, north of the River St. Lawrence; and finally sheet twelve gives the western coast of North America, including the peninsula and the Gulf of California.

The last sheet of the atlas reproduces an old English chart with the inscription "Thomas Hood made this platte 1592." The original belongs to the valuable collection of the Duke of Northumberland, Robert Dudley, who died 1639 at Florence in Italy. The part of America which is here represented, comprises the great Antilles, the Bahama isles, the coast of Yucatan, Mexico, Florida and Norumbega, which latter name is retained for a considerable part of the American coast south of the River St. Lawrence.

The atlas therefore comprises a great number of most valuable documents in relation to the history of the discovery of the new continent. The execution of the different sheets is so excellent, that the whole work may justly be called splendid. The text accompanying the same, contains, besides Kunstmann's comments above mentioned and the explanatory notes to the single charts, a log-book, first edited by G. M. Thomas, which was taken from a ship of Drake's third expedition (Aug. 28, 1595 until May 10, 1596,) and is preserved in the Royal Library at Munich.

THE FATE OF SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.—The following letter has been addressed to the Secretary of the Admiralty by Capt. F. L. McClintock, R. N.

"Yacht Fox, R. Y. S.

"Sir: I beg you will inform the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty of the safe return to this country of Lady Franklin's Final Searching Expedition, which I have had the honor to conduct.

"Their lordships will rejoice to hear that our endeavors to ascertain the fate of the 'Franklin Expedition' have met with complete success.

"At Point Victory, on the northwest coast of King William's Island, a record has been found, dated the 25th of April, 1848, and signed by Captains Crozier and Fitzjames. By it we were